

# THE LIBRARY ASSISTANT

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE ASSOCIATION  
OF ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS

(Section of the Library  
Association)

*Edited by T. E. Callander, A.L.A.*

Fulham Public Libraries



## CONTENTS

	Page
EDITORIAL . . . . .	30
BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES . . . . .	32
H. E. Milliken	
NEW MEMBERS . . . . .	36
RETROSPECT . . . . .	37
F. M. Gardner	
THE DIVISIONS . . . . .	41

No. 403

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## EDITORIAL

THE next meeting of the Association will be held jointly with the London and Home Counties Branch of the Library Association on Wednesday, 8th February, at 7 p.m., at the New Eltham Public Library.

*Speaker* : W. A. Munford, Ilford Public Libraries.

*Subject* : " Libraries and librarians now and in the new era."

*Chairman* : Councillor L. J. Needham (Chairman, Libraries and Museums Committee, Woolwich Borough Council).

*Transport* : Southern Railway to New Eltham Station. Thence by 21 Bus, which passes the Library. *Trains* : Charing Cross, 6.22 p.m.; London Bridge, 6.28 p.m. Fare, 1s. 4d.

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The next meeting of the Council will be held at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, 15th February, at the National Library for the Blind.

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Mr. Martin asks us to point out that, in the *L.A.R.* for January, the *Report on hours and conditions*, recently issued by the A.A.L., is priced at 1s. This is a misprint. The price to members is 1s. 6d., plus 2d. postage.

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We hear from Mr. Martin that stocks of Hewitt's *Summary of Library law* are getting low. This important book is the most easily digestible of all the library law books. It is thoroughly up-to-date, and is essential to students. Those who have the final examinations ahead of them would be well advised to obtain a copy of the *Summary* before stocks are exhausted, as it is most unlikely that it will be reprinted for some years.

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*Correspondence Courses*.—Some consternation has been felt among students regarding the early closing dates for the courses under the new syllabus. The Council now have the matter under consideration, but, in the meantime, have agreed to allow students who sat for the December examinations to join the courses up to 1st March. This concession is definitely only for the people just mentioned, and on the condition that they catch up with the January students within a specified time. Under no circumstances will other students be admitted.

This notice should have appeared in last month's *ASSISTANT*, but was unfortunately lost in the post on the way to the Editor.

## The Library Assistant

Those of us present at the Westminster Central Library on Wednesday, 11th January, to hear Mr. H. E. Milliken, of the B.B.C., lecture on "Broadcasting and public libraries," felt that here was a clash of interests. Battle was in the air; the disseminators of the spoken word *versus* ourselves, the "intelligent" custodians of the written word.

Co-operation there certainly is: 90,000 talks programmes going each quarter to 400 library authorities; advance book-lists hot from the studies of prospective lecturers; library listening groups: all these, and other manifestations.

Yet some of us did not like being told that broadcasting must have its share in the glory of increased library issues and credit for assisting and directing our borrowers' reading. We are so terribly afraid of the "broadcast mind" which absorbs tit-bits from the lecturer's talk, and in time loses the power of concentrated thinking. Do we thereby fear for ourselves and our future?

The B.B.C. is a force in most spheres. In that in which we have interest we seem to resent its power and its intrusion. But it is a kindly force—one holding out the hand of co-operation all the way.

Votes of thanks were extended to the lecturer, to Mr. Berwick Sayers, the Chairman, and to the Westminster authorities for their hospitality. The social time was an added joy.

B. B.

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The Annual Meeting of the Association of Assistant Librarians will be held in London on 14th June, 1933. The Council wish to obtain some idea of the number of members who will attend this meeting. All Divisional Secretaries will be circularized, but those not attached to any Division and outside the Metropolitan Police Area should notify Mr. W. C. Pugsley, Branch Library, High Road, Chadwell Heath, of their intention to attend, *not later than Saturday, 11th February.*

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Mr. Gardner complains that his supply of cannon-fodder for *Valuations* is falling off. We would remind librarians that the scope of this feature includes all and any printed matter issued by public libraries, and that such publications should be sent for review direct to Mr. Gardner at the Woodhouse Moor Branch Library, Leeds, Yorks.

## The Library Assistant

### BROADCASTING AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES

By H. E. MILLIKEN

for the Central Council for Broadcast Adult Education

**I**T is, I feel, a great privilege to have been asked to speak to you here to-night, and I am most glad to avail myself of the opportunity.

Librarians are, by the nature of their work, if I may so put it, guardians of the written word, and the British Broadcasting Corporation, to an extent which would have been difficult to imagine ten years ago, is in a very large measure responsible for the spoken word. It is worth while considering the history of both written and spoken word. Until the invention of printing the spoken word was almost entirely the medium whereby information was disseminated and education carried on. The textbook which we know so well in schools to-day was non-existent. So strongly was it felt by some of the ancients that by the actual hearing of the human voice alone could the State be held together, that Aristotle, when discussing the size of the State, gave it as his opinion that citizens should not be greater in number than could collect in one place to hear the voice of the herald. True, not all ancient States were as small as those of Greece, but an Empire like the Roman would have been far easier to govern had printing, let alone broadcasting, been available. It would be interesting to speculate how much modern highly organized States owe to printing. What they will owe to broadcasting remains yet to be seen.

With the arrival of printing the spoken word suffered a decline, and it is interesting to notice that whereas all ancient systems of education included the subject of rhetoric, modern systems omit this topic and its place has been taken by the written essay. Whether this is altogether a good thing you may like to consider. It certainly looks as if the coming of broadcasting will cause the spoken word once again to take a larger place in the general life of the community than it has done for a long time. Not that it can ever displace the written word, and no one connected with broadcasting either dreams or wishes that it should. On the contrary, let us hope that it does and will increase the amount of reading, and, as you know, it is on this very subject, how the British Broadcasting Corporation and public libraries can help each other to give the public the best of both services, that I am to speak.

Ever since the Central Council for Broadcast Adult Education was set up some four years ago co-operation between public libraries and those responsible for arranging broadcast talks has been very close—our Chairman here to-night, Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers, Librarian of Croydon, is a member of that body. This should assure you that the importance of public libraries is not likely to be forgotten.

## The Library Assistant

I want now to consider two questions. Firstly, Has broadcasting tended to increase or decrease the amount of reading done? and secondly, Have we any evidence to show whether particular broadcast talks have directed reading into definite channels? I do not for one moment think that either of these questions can be answered at all dogmatically. At present there is no evidence which can be regarded as scientific, but at the same time there are indications which are worth considering. It is a well-known fact, which you know better than I do, that in the last three or four years the library issues have increased very largely indeed. No one in their senses would put down this increase solely to broadcasting, but it is a little difficult to believe that it has not played its part. There are other factors, such as the improvement in the library services. I do not mean improvement in librarians, though this may have taken place, but I refer to such things as the increased amount of funds allowed for libraries, and the fine buildings in which many are now housed. Then, of course, there is unemployment and the increased leisure of those who are employed. All these have played their part, but there are people, not connected with the B.B.C., who think that broadcasting has made its contribution.

Various enquiries have been made. There was the interesting enquiry which Mr. Berwick Sayers undertook in the summer of 1931, though this enquiry was designed rather to ascertain whether broadcasting talks directed reading than to find out whether they led to increased issues, though naturally the two things are closely connected. In the autumn of the same year the *Manchester Guardian* instituted an enquiry and asked a number of leading librarians whether they thought broadcasting was helping their issues. Replies varied very much. Some librarians were emphatic that they did, others were doubtful, some replied with a plain negative. Now this month we find *Everyman* conducting a similar enquiry. Again the replies so far received are uncertain, but perhaps are best summed up by the librarian who writes: "The talks must create or renew an interest in literature such as is recommended season by season." One other librarian remarks that, "judging from the extraordinary increase in reading, particularly non-fiction, the percentage of which to the total issues is 40 per cent. in this library, there is little doubt that the talks have stimulated reading." I mention this because some personal enquiries made in the North of England brought out the same point, that the increase in issues is by no means solely confined to works of fiction.

Summing up these enquiries, it would seem that broadcasting has played its part in encouraging reading, but that it is extremely unlikely that it will ever be possible to measure statistically the part which it plays, and personally I see no reason for wishing to know to "the nicely calculated less or more."

I think it may interest you, though it is not strictly relevant, if I mention to you some facts given to us by Messrs. Sherratt & Hughes, of Manchester. They told

## The Library Assistant

us not very long ago that certain broadcast talks had been responsible for the following sales from their bookshop: 450 copies of "*The Mysterious universe*"; 100 copies of *The Nature of the physical world*; 25 copies of Dean Inge's *Essays*. I mention the facts and leave them for your interpretation. I would add that in the autumn of 1931 the demand for copies of *The Way of all flesh* was difficult to meet, and that 5,000 copies of Bertrand Russell's *What I believe* were reprinted. Whatever doubt there may have been in other cases, there can be no doubt at all that the demand for these two books was due to broadcasting.

In view of what I have said, I do not think I need spend much time on discussing whether broadcast talks tend to direct reading into particular channels. Clearly in some cases they do, but again statistical measurement is impossible. Broadly speaking, I think we may say that increased issues of library books is in part due to broadcasting, because of the general interest which the talks stimulate, and that from time to time the actual course into which this reading flows can be mapped out.

I now wish to speak of the concrete way in which librarians co-operate with the B.B.C. Before I come on to this subject I want to assure you that those responsible for broadcast programmes, and especially those responsible for talks programmes, are aware of the dangers of what has been called "passive listening." There is a danger that listeners may uncritically accept much that they hear in broadcast talks, and it is of first-rate importance that this attitude of mind should be combated by every possible means, and that an alert, active, critical state of mind should be encouraged. If after listening people will only read, a great step forward will have been taken.

The B.B.C. takes definite steps to encourage reading, and I am glad to say hundreds of librarians are giving magnificent help in making these efforts widely known, and it is difficult to exaggerate the value of their co-operation. First of all the talks programme, a copy of which I have in my hand. In this there are lists of books which speakers recommend, and over 400 of the 600 library authorities in the United Kingdom distribute supplies of each programme as it is issued. They are responsible for distributing something like 70,000 or 80,000 of these programmes. Then there are the talks pamphlets, specimen complimentary copies of which are sent to every librarian who wants them. The talks pamphlet, I perhaps ought to explain, is a booklet written specially in connection with a given series of talks. Usually it contains an outline of the subject of the series, and when possible an actual syllabus of the talks to be given. Most of them are illustrated with pictures, diagrams, and charts, and their price is usually about 4d. Most important for us to-night, these pamphlets also contain book-lists. An advance book-list, which contains all the books recommended both in the programme and in the pamphlets, is sent out three times a year by the B.B.C., to help librarians. Many

## The Library Assistant

librarians go over their shelves, and where possible make additions. Correspondence received leaves us in no doubt that this list is of real help to libraries. In the last four years, too, there have been posters specially printed for use in public libraries, and again there is reason to believe that libraries find them helpful.

Last, but by no means least important, there is *The Listener*, in which the more important talks given each week are published. The fact that the B.B.C. prints so much of what is spoken at the microphone is, I think, convincing proof that the importance of the printed word is never forgotten by the Corporation. We hope and believe that *The Listener* is to be found in the reading-rooms of many public libraries.

These, then, are some of the ways in which the B.B.C. endeavours to be helpful to librarians, and librarians, as I have already said, have come forward nobly and given of their best in making the maximum use of what we offer. But there are fields where the librarian acts alone. I want to mention two. You know better than I do how much users of public libraries appreciate guidance in reading, and to some people it is depressing to go into a room full of books without knowing at all what to read. The very multitude of books is something appalling. Many librarians are in the habit of dealing with this problem by arranging special displays where comparatively few books are attractively set out and their range indicated. Various occasions are the cause for these special exhibits, perhaps some local or national centenary. Some librarians have found certain broadcast talks favourable occasions for these displays, and we recently received at this office from a Midland library with whom we have had no special dealings an excellent photograph showing, not only books relating to a particular series of broadcast talks, but the specially designed posters which had been tastefully placed near them. Sometimes these efforts have been thoroughly successful. On other occasions we hear that the demand for books has been very slight, but I cannot help thinking that in a broad way they must have a great value. That is one activity connected with broadcasting where the librarian must act alone. Here is a second.

Another step which the Central Council for Broadcast Adult Education takes to combat the dangers of passive listening is the encouragement of wireless listening and discussion groups, and in the last four years the Central Council and its four Area Councils have given much time and thought to this matter.

A wireless listening and discussion group is something quite simple. Varying numbers of people gather round a loud speaker to hear a broadcast talk, and when it is over they proceed to discuss the various points raised, under a leader. I am glad to say that the number of these groups is growing, and that the figure for last autumn was approximately 570, which shows a considerable increase on the corresponding period last year. My description of what a discussion group is sounds very simple, but you will all realize that to collect a group, to arrange for a

## The Library Assistant

loud speaker and for a suitable place in which to meet is by no means easy. Here again the librarians have acted, and one of the earliest discussion groups was held in the Gulson Library, at Coventry, and I think you will be glad to know that groups have been held there, I think, without intermission for the last four years and are still flourishing. Obviously all librarians, owing to lack of accommodation and other reasons, cannot help in this way. Sometimes, too, it must be admitted, the groups failed for some reason or other. One thing, however, we can be certain of, and that is, that of all the places for discussion groups to meet none is more suitable than a public library, and one hopes that where they are successful they tend to make the public library more and more what it should be—the educational centre of the district it serves.

I do not want to overstress listening groups, valuable as they are. Clearly the members of listening groups can only be a comparatively small number of listeners and of the total number of those who use the public library, but they may be the yeast which will leaven the lump.

I would like to end with a quotation from a letter from the Librarian of a Public Library in North Wales, which by a happy coincidence only arrived in the office this morning. He writes: "The experiment of wireless discussion groups is not altogether successful. The town comprises mostly those whose work is done. Enthusiastic interest was aroused in the talks by the distribution of the talks programmes. The books suggested were placed in the public library, and have been well used. The talks have definitely (here at least) influenced the senior reading of the town—the non-fiction issues having increased by nearly 120 per cent."

I think there is a good deal of matter in these few short sentences, and I might add that perhaps the experiment in group listening was not as successful as it might have been because an attempt was made to run three or four groups, which is in most cases too many. It is better to concentrate on one. What it does prove conclusively is that broadcasting and the use of public libraries often go hand in hand. Sometimes the connection is difficult to trace. Sometimes it seems to be non-existent, or at any rate untraceable, but here is a case where the relation has been proved. Let us hope that, as occasion offers, instances of like successful co-operation may multiply themselves through the length and breadth of the country.

## NEW MEMBERS

Rosalynde Beckett (Falmouth); John S. Bristow (Southall-Norwood); Rhoda A. Bubb (Subject Index to Periodicals, 26/27 Bedford Square); Ina F. Hill (Sidcup); Miss E. Hine (Croydon); E. P. Romeril (Leyton); E. H. Trevitt (Grimsby); Phyllis E. Walker (Standard Telephones and Cables Library, Colindale, N.W.9).



## The Library Assistant

### RETROSPECT, 1932

By F. M. GARDNER

THERE is something about the New Year. The Scottish race realize it, because they are a nation acutely conscious of the finiteness of life. The English do not very much realize it, because they are a feckless and improvident people. But there is something about the New Year. It is the time of all times when we sense the ticking of the clock. A minute, an hour, a day, they slip away quickly, but a whole year passing away under our feet! It is too much. So we frantically turn back and clutch at the past.

This is especially the case in the book world. The New Year is the season when reviewers turn an extra penny by reading over their files and reconsidering their judgments of the year. I have just passed through a flood of it (remember that though you are reading this in February, I am writing it in January). Mr. Gerald Gould has arranged his adjectives in order of merit: the *Bookman* has produced its usual special number, which I read with my usual disappointment (I always seem to be looking in the *Bookman* for something that isn't there); Mr. James Agate achieved the magazine page of the *Daily Express*—or was it Mr. James Douglas?—I forget; while a number of other critics, including Messrs. Priestley, Callander, and Stevenson, expressed themselves with their usual charm.

I feel very much in the mood for saying, "Please, can I come too?" This reviewing business is a catching disease. It is an itch partly compounded of the desire to share a good thing, and partly of the desire to improve one's neighbour. Both those desires work both ways. The person who is told a good story always feels it incumbent to tell one in return, and the person bent on improving his neighbour can seldom evade a few home thrusts. And since I have the licence to enter the lists myself (thanking heaven for that title of *Valuations*), I will avail myself of it.

With a great effort of memory, I have listed ten books published in 1932 that seemed to me important. They are: Bennett's *Journals*, Ackerly's *Hindoo holiday*, Cole's *Intelligent man's guide thro' world chaos*, Wells's *Work, wealth and happiness of mankind*, Salter's *Recovery*, Angell's *Unseen assassins*, Wilenski's *Meaning of modern sculpture*, Garnett's *Rabbit in the air*, Wilson's *Devil take the hindmost*, and Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution*. I would probably make the ten twelve with Lawrence's *Letters* and Hemingway's *Death in the afternoon*, but unfortunately neither of them has come my way yet.

To me, far and far away the most interesting book of the year was the late Arnold Bennett's *Journals*. For one thing, it was such a surprise. One expected something, of course, from the hint given by the *Journal*, 1929. But a million words!

## The Library Assistant

And it explained so much that one had only half known about Bennett. It brought out the enormous contradictions that perhaps exist in everyone, but which are magnified in the artist. His enormous egotism and his sympathetic understanding of other people's minds. His love of life and the self-discipline that made him shut himself away for months on end. His interest in sex, and his instinctive purity (all Bennett's heroines are virgins at heart—even the pretty lady). I read every word with avidity, and am almost ready to say that this book will take its place beside *Barbellion*.

I have put four books on sociology on my list—not particularly because I think that any of them will be read fifty years hence, but because they are all of them part of a significant attempt to bring the facts of living home to the ordinary man. Nineteen thirty-two was a year in which the impotence of our politicians and the backwardness of our social structure should have become apparent to the most self-satisfied person. But they did not. So the books of Wells, Cole, and Angell become important to us who have to stand or fall with the community whether we want to or not. The logic of Mr. Wells and Sir Norman Angell is inescapable and crushing. I see no reason to dispute the reasons for our troubles as set forth by Mr. Cole. Sir Arthur Salter is less outspoken, but his book is none the less impressive.

I said four books on sociology. I should have perhaps said five, or even six. For though Wilson's *Devil take the hindmost* and Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution* are respectively dielectric and historical, they both have a sociological significance. *Devil take the hindmost* has not been particularly well noticed, but I found it enormously interesting. It is a fragmentary history of a year of the slump in America—written in a method rather reminiscent of John Dos Passos' camera eye. Taken by themselves the episodes are not important, but their effect is cumulative, and one puts down the book with a feeling that America is not a pleasant place for the non-materialist. It is a curious thing, but modern American writers seldom seem to have much good to say about their country. About Trotsky's book it is difficult to say much with several volumes still to come, but one can see, from the first volume, that this is a work of value and also of intrinsic interest. We have known for some time that Trotsky is a statesman of merit and a soldier of something more than merit; we begin to see him now as a most able writer. He is biased, of course, but what he says is none the less important. I remember the time when Trotsky was caricatured as a subhuman person clad mainly in sheepskin boots and a beard, and festooned with an armoury of carving knives and revolvers. Strange how fear distorts men's minds. I should not be at all surprised if Attila was really a vegetarian.

Then to turn to lighter things. *Hindoo holiday* I thought one of the best travel books I had seen for years, with an extraordinarily vivid characterization and a

## The Library Assistant

subtle portrait of the Oriental mind (that sounds like a review of a book by Thomas Burke). I have wondered, perhaps unfairly, how much of it is true, because at times Mr. Ackerly is strongly reminiscent of Evelyn Waugh. His opening is very Waugh-ish. He happened to be out of a job, and someone asked him if he would like to be companion to a rajah. Now, no one has ever asked me to be companion to a rajah. No one is ever likely to, and if they did, I feel sure that the rajah would be much inferior to Mr. Ackerly's. If Mr. Ackerly's book is true, then he is to be congratulated on having found the stuff of fiction in fact.

And then there was *Rabbit in the air*. I can enjoy Mr. Garnett for his style alone, though I am always consumed with envy at his power of getting so much into so few words. People like Mr. Garnett are mainly responsible for us amateurs renouncing our ambitions. Mr. Garnett's style, which soars and swoops so easily and quietly, is here perfectly wedded to his subject, and he unfolds for us an entirely new sensation. The only other thing I remember which in any way conveys the sensation of flight is a short story of Wells—I forget the title, but you will no doubt know the one I mean.

Now, what have I left? Just Wilenski's book, *The Meaning of modern sculpture*. Not everyone's book this. Mr. Wilenski's style is rather reminiscent of a pneumatic drill, and he is so full of his subject that he concedes nothing and spares no one. But I think the book is important. His attacks on the Greek tradition are stimulating, and though I dare not venture an opinion on their truth, I thought the replies of his outraged critics rather feeble. In any case, whatever the imperfections of the Greek sculpture we possess, it is obvious to anyone with a particle of artistic sensibility that our so-called adherence to the Greek ideal has made our cities a desolation of ugliness and absurdity. One cannot blend the Greek tradition with the top-hat.

So much for my estimation of the most important books of 1932. You will probably disagree with me. I hope you do. For in entering the preserves of Messrs. Priestley, Callander, and Stevenson I had an end in view. I was not so much concerned with displaying my taste in reading as emphasizing that it was my taste. I wished, in fact, to point a moral.

The moral is this. All critics speak from a personal point of view. They may be high-brow, like Mrs. Leavis (who was sent from heaven to prick the bubble of conceit in librarians); high-brow middle-brow, like Mr. Callander; middle-brow, like Mr. Priestley; or low-brow like—well, any critic you dislike. One would not have it otherwise. We soon get to know their views, and value their criticism accordingly. They are critics, however, by profession. We (and here comes the moral) are not. We are critics by instinct, but by profession we are librarians. The two, unfortunately, clash. To the librarian personal taste may be a positive danger. He has to learn to sink to some extent his personal

## The Library Assistant

likings in order to gauge the mass taste of his readers. Now, that is a very difficult thing to do. No matter how impersonal one tries to make book selection, some personal idiosyncrasy is bound to creep in.

For the wise librarian, who realizes this, the New Year may be a sort of mental stocktaking. He can judge on what lines he has, perhaps unconsciously, been directing his readers. He can discover how far his own personal leanings have led him astray. He can also attempt to discover in what direction the taste of his borrowers is trending. It is an investigation that will yield few, if any, statistical results, and the policy one can get from them must necessarily be vague. But the science of book selection is, alas ! all very vague.

The ten books I have mentioned are the ten books I would most like my own borrowers to have read during the past year. The idiosyncrasy which directed my choice is quite plain. I have a leaning towards books which give, not so much information or æsthetic pleasure, but are productive of ideas. Given that those ten books are the ones I recommended to my borrowers, would my borrowers generally have recommended the same ten books to me ?

The answer, I am afraid, is in the negative. To begin with, they did not share my enthusiasm for Arnold Bennett's *Journals*. Even people I knew to be admirers of Bennett's novels condemned the *Journals* as scrappy. Nor did they care very much for *Hindoo holiday*. Too fantastic, they said—though they did not use that word. They apparently preferred that rather boastful book of Eric Muspratt's, for it had twice the demand. *A Rabbit in the air* went fairly well, rather surprisingly, for Garnett is not my readers' favourite author.

I was not hopeful of *The Meaning of modern sculpture*, for my borrowers do not care very much for art. I have propagated for a long time with Clive Bell and Roger Fry with no apparent effect. And my fears were realized.

The sociological books, I found, had issued better than I expected. Wells always commands an audience, and Cole's book had a topical appeal which placed it in great demand. It has been one of the most asked-for books of the year, though I do not know how many readers finished it. *Recovery* and *The Unseen assassins* issued fairly well when first added, but stay on the shelf longer and longer each time they are returned. A pity. I would like to compel everybody to read *The Unseen assassins* (together with *The Great illusion*) before being given the franchise. *Devil take the hindmost* had good issues, but its rather sensational title and journalistic style had a lot to do with them. Trotsky's book has not been added long enough for me to form any estimation—but I foresee a big demand.

The two books most asked for during the year are not in my list at all. They were Marjoribanks' *Life of Lord Carson* and Nichols's *Down the garden path*. The one I thought dreadfully dull ; the other made me feel slightly sick.

## The Library Assistant

And what can one deduce from all this ? That the public have no use for ideas ? That they have no taste ? That I have no taste ?

I will tell you only one of my conclusions. We librarians have still got a lot to learn.

Now go and try the experiment yourself.



## THE DIVISIONS

### MIDLAND DIVISION

As previously reported here, the Division has joined forces with the Birmingham and District Branch of the Library Association for purposes of meetings, etc. The first of the activities to be organized by the Joint Committee of the two bodies was a tea and Social Evening, held at Kunzle's Café, Birmingham, on 11th January, when over a hundred members spent a very happy evening. The organizers, eschewing any form of "potted" music, engaged a Dance Band, which supported a splendid programme of vocal, instrumental, and humorous items, recitations, etc., contributed by members from widely distant parts of the area.

The affair was such a social and financial success that the Joint Committee is considering arrangements for a similar evening, probably on 22nd March.

J. H. D.



### NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION

#### LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT BRANCH

A meeting was held on Tuesday evening, 10th January, when—by kind permission of the Chief Librarian—forty-two members met at the new Branch Library at Knotty Ash, Liverpool.

After inspecting the Library, which comprises many modern improvements, a reading from J. B. Priestley's *Dangerous corner* was given. This revealed hitherto unsuspected talent among the Staff, and was so well received that it is hoped to arrange a similar function in the near future.

T. E. HEADON, *Hon. Secretary.*



### SOUTH WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE DIVISION

Some seventy members attended the Annual General Meeting held on 21st December, at Cardiff. Mr. E. Sellick, in his secretarial report, reviewed the social and professional activities of the year—nine meetings were held, including joint meetings with the Welsh branch of the L.A. Co-operation of the most

## The Library Assistant

valuable kind was secured with the latter body, and professional librarianship in Wales should benefit in the future. The programme for the next session was outlined, and references made to proposed activities of the Division.

The election of officers and committee resulted as follows :

*Hon. President* : Mr. Harry Farr, F.L.A. (Cardiff).

*Hon. Vice-President* : Mr. John Warner, F.L.A. (Newport).

*Chairman* : Mr. C. Sexton, F.L.A. (Cardiff).

*Vice-Chairman* : Mr. G. C. Poole, A.L.A. (Cardiff).

*Treasurer* : Mr. W. J. Collett (Newport).

*Secretary* : Mr. E. Sellick (Cardiff).

*Asst. Secretary* : Mr. E. H. Ellis (Cardiff).

*Committee* : Messrs. L. A. Burgess, F.L.A., W. B. Harris, F. McDonald, F.L.A., R. Norman, A.L.A. (Cardiff); Miss P. Craze, Miss Eryl Williams (Cardiff); Miss E. Hiles (Newport); Miss M. Howell (Bridgend).

On the conclusion of the meeting, the company partook of refreshments, and were afterwards entertained, in varying degrees, by the performance of a one-act farce by the Cardiff staff. This was followed by games of both riotous and restrained nature, supplemented by dancing to the strains of a radio-gramophone. Finally, the South Wales Division terminated the second year of its existence with the singing, in tones varying from dulcet to deafening, of the hackneyed but ever-effective "Auld Lang Syne."

The following are the skeleton arrangements for the first two meetings in the New Year :

*February*.—A meeting will be held in the new Cardiff Branch Library at Ely, and it is hoped that an address will be given on the One-room Branch, of which Ely is an example, by Mr. E. J. Rees, the superintendent of Branch Libraries at Cardiff, while, in *March*, Port Talbot Library will be the venue and the programme will include a visit to Margam Abbey.

Fuller details of these meetings will be circulated to all members at a later date.

E. H. E., *per* ELLIS SELICK, *Hon. Secretary*.

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